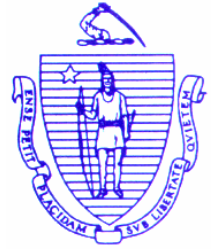




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Marine Fisheries Advisory
January 23, 2004

**EMERGENCY ACTION TO REOPEN A PORTION OF
MASSACHUSETTS BAY NORTH OF BOSTON**

Effective 0001 hours on February 1, 2004, *Marine Fisheries* will rescind its emergency commercial fishing restrictions in an area that extends from the shoreline eastward and is west of the 70° 45' longitude, south of 42° 30' latitude, and north of 42° 24' latitude. On December 16, 2003 *Marine Fisheries* closed this portion of Massachusetts Bay north of Boston (see gray area referenced in map below). Since announcement of that emergency closure the following restrictions have been in place:

For gillnetters:

- gillnetting is prohibited; and
- storing or abandoning gear in this area is also unlawful; all nets must be removed from the area by December 15.

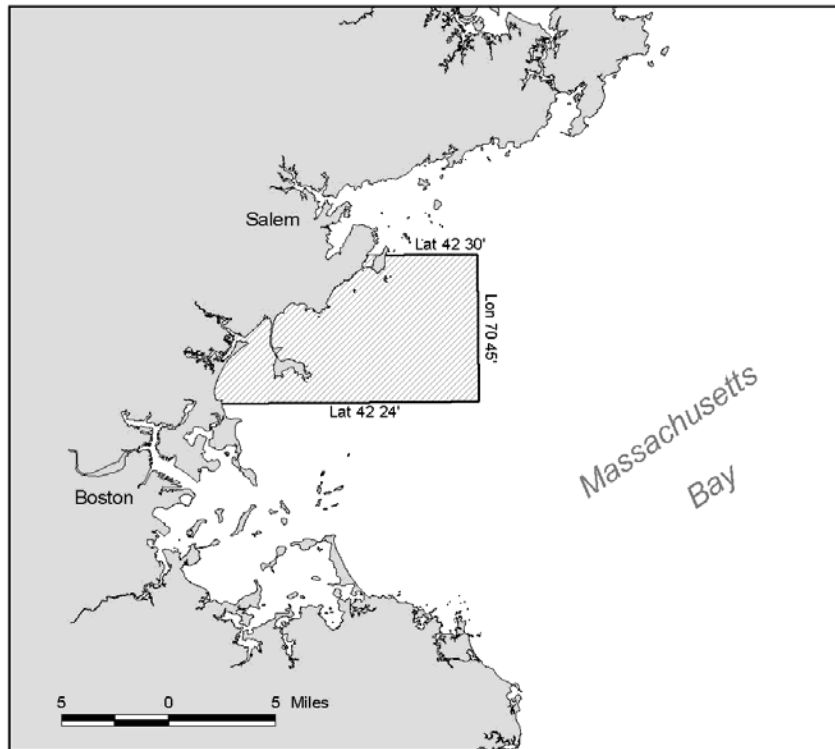
For longliners:

- prohibited from fishing more 500 hooks;
- must use only circle hooks at least as large as 11/0; and
- may fish only between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

THESE RESTRICTIONS WILL NO LONGER BE IN PLACE EFFECTIVE 0001 HOURS ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2004. Fishermen returning to this area to fish will be subject to taking at-sea observers upon request. Future management of fishing for this area will be considered at upcoming public hearings.

Marine Fisheries has documented commercial catches taken from this area in December were well in excess of the trip limits and consequent discarding and high-grading. All commercial fishermen are reminded that these and other regulations protecting cod and other marine fisheries resources are vital to the rebuilding of historic and valuable fish populations. Violations of any of the rules designed to protect fishery resources for the public's long-term use and enjoyment will be dealt with severely and may include permit seizures and revocations.

Gillnetters are reminded that effective February 1, 2004 through May 31, 2004 the near-shore winter flounder spawning closure is in effect (322 CMR 8.09), and effective March 1, 2004 through March 31, 2004, gillnetting is prohibited in all of state waters south of 42° 30' latitude including waters south of Marblehead to Cape Cod (322 CMR 4.08).



This area extends from the shoreline eastward and is west of the 70 45' longitude, south of 42° 30' latitude, and north of 42° 24' latitude.

For further information contact *Marine Fisheries* at 617 626-1520 or the Division of Law Enforcement at 978-283-7764.